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ABSTRACT

This introductory manual for the College Student Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSSQ) includes a description of the test, tentative norms, a summary of findings to date regarding psychometric characteristics of the instrument, and suggestions for possible uses. The manual is intended to supply sufficient material for the practical needs of most test users. (See TM 000 979 for questionnaire.) (Author/MS)

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college student satisfaction questionnaire (cssq)

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manual

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INTRODUCTION

This is an introductory manual for the College Student Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSSQ). It includes a description of the test, tentative norms, a summary of findings to date regarding psychometric characteristics of the instrument, and suggestions for possible uses. The manual is intended to supply sufficient material for the practical needs of most test users.

Initial statistical analyses with the CSSQ were based on two samples totaling 1106 students. All normative data for this manual was derived from a later, ten-college sample with a total of 3121 students. These norms and all information provided in this manual are preliminary, pending further data collection and analysis.

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WHY A COLLEGE STUDENT SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE?

College student satisfaction and dissatisfaction, although possibly one of the most meaningful indicators of student attitudes toward their educational experiences, is probably one of the least investigated variables in the college setting. The College Student Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSSQ) was constructed to begin to fill a void in the systematic study of this ever-present campus variable.

The development of the CSSQ was based on the premise that the study of college student satisfaction can draw upon principles and methods which have derived from years of research on the satisfaction of employees in business and industry (e.g., Herzberg, Mausner, Peterson & Capwell, 1957; Hoppock, 1935; Vroom, 1964). Job satisfaction research has provided meaningful information for employers seeking to understand and satisfy the needs of their employees, in order to bring about better work adjustment and greater productivity. In the same way, a better understanding of the satisfactions and dissatisfactions of students can lead to reasoned changes in the college environment, which in turn should help students move toward improved adjustment and a higher level of performance in the student's "job;" i.e., learning.

For example, research in job satisfaction has shown a consistent negative relationship between job satisfaction and job turnover (i.e., the greater the satisfaction, the less the turnover), a less consistent but generally negative relationship between job satisfaction and absence from work, also with accidents on the job (Vroom, 1964). No consistent relationship has been found between job satisfaction and job performance (e.g., Brayfield and Crockett, 1955); a study by Betz (1971), however suggests that job satisfaction may have an indirect relationship with job performance, functioning as a moderator variable affecting the relationship between ability and job performance.

If the college student can be viewed as a working person, whose "employment" (though without monetary remuneration) is the job of studying and learning, then much that is known about the traditionally-defined "worker" should be true also for the student; e.g., student satisfaction with college should be negatively related to turnover (dropping out of college). To the extent that research supports this proposed analogue, the development of an understanding of college student satisfaction can be expedited; in turn, research based on college student satisfaction may eventually have implications for job satisfaction research. Much of the research with the CSSQ has been designed to test this hypothesis: that job satisfaction and student satisfaction are analogous phenomena, and that, therefore, present knowledge regarding job satisfaction can be applied in the college setting as a means of improving student adjustment and reducing student unrest.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CSSQ

The initial CSSQ (Form A) was a 130-item instrument developed from a pool of more than 300 items thought to be representative of six selected satisfaction dimensions: Policies and Procedures, Working Conditions, Compensation, Quality of Education, Social Life and Recognition.

Following an initial administration of the 139-item instrument to 643 Iowa State University students, and analysis of the resulting data, a revised form (Form B) was developed, consisting of 92 of the original 139 items (Betz, Klingensmith and Menne, 1970). The 92 items for Form B were selected on the basis of correlations between items within each scale, and between items and total scale score.

Form B was then administered to a new sample of 463 students attending Iowa State University during winter quarter 1969. Factor analyses of responses to the selected 92 items were carried out separately for the two student groups (the fall 1968 group using Form A, the winter 1969 group using Form B). Three different factor analytic approaches were applied: the multiple group method with highest correlations in the diagonal of the correlation matrix, the principle components method with unity in the diagonal, and the principle components method with highest correlations in the diagonal. In each case, six factors were extracted and rotated to a Varimax solution. Item loadings of .30 or above were compared across samples for each factor, to determine the extent to which the derived factors were consistent across the two samples, and to ascertain the extent to which the statistically-derived factors resulting from each of the three methods agreed with the logically-developed scales.

Although the factors resulting from the three types of factor analysis were generally similar, the most readily-interpretable results were those produced by the principle components analysis with highest correlations in the diagonal (Betz, Menne, Starr, and Klingensmith, 1971). The separate factor analyses of the two samples were surprisingly consistent and generally encouraging in their support of the origiral logically-derived CSSQ scales. Despite the use of different student groups, differing times in the academic year and different forms of the CSSQ (although comprised of identical items), between-group agreement on three factors (Compensation, Social Life and Working Conditions) was extensive. The extent of agreement across samples and methods on the Quality of Education and Recongnition factors was less extensive but still supportive of the logically-developed scales. For the sixth scale, Policies and Procedures, the results were relatively inconsistent. At least one method failed to support this factor, a possible indication that the factor is unstable or an inappropriate dimension of over-all college student satisfaction. Generally, the factor analytic results appeared to give considerable support for using the scales for Quality of Education, Social Life, Working Conditions, Compensation (study pressures) and Recognition as measures of important dimensions of college student satisfaction.

On the basis of the series of analyses reported above and elsewhere in this manual, the present form of the CSSQ, Form C, was developed and recent research has been based on this instrument. Form C consists of 70 items, all derived from previous forms of the CSSQ, and arranged in five scales: Working Conditions, Compensation, Quality of Education, Social Life, Recognition.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CSSQ

The College Student Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSSQ), Form C, consists of 70 items relating to various aspects of college life. Administration of the instrument requires a student to choose, on a 5-choice Likert-type scale, the degree of satisfaction he feels regarding each aspect of his college. Response alternatives range from "Very Dissatisfied," through "Satisfied," to "Very Satisfied," scored one to five points respectively. Scoring of the responses results in five scale scores, each derived from responses to 14 selected items. The five scales are as follows:

Working Conditions: The physical conditions of the student's college life, such as the cleanliness and comfort of his place of residence, adequacy of study areas on campus, quality of meals, facilities for lounging between classes;

Compensation: The amount of input (e.g., study) required relative to academic outcomes (e.g., grades), and the effect of input demands on the student's fulfillment of his other needs and goals;

Quality of Education: The various academic conditions related to the individual's intellectual and vocational development, such as the competence and helpfulness of faculty and staff, including advisors and counselors, and the adequacy of curriculum requirements, teaching methods, and assignments;

Social Life: Opportunities to meet socially relevant goals, such as dating, meeting compatible or interesting people, making friends, participating in campus events and informal social activities;

Recognition: Attitudes and behaviors of faculty and students indicating acceptance of the student as a worthwhile individual.

Scale scores are based on the sum of the 14 item responses for each scale. A total satisfaction score is derived by summing all 70 item responses. There is no time limit for the questionnaire; most individuals are able to complete the form in 10 to 15 minutes. Identifying information, including age, sex, year in school and type of residence, is requested in the questionnaire instructions, for use in special analyses.

Uses of the CSSQ

The CSSQ can serve as a useful group measuring device. The administration of the CSSQ can give college administrative personnel a stepping off point for understanding the strengths and weaknesses of their institutions on each dimension tapped by the CSSQ as well as for isolating specific changes that might be implemented in the college, university, or separate units thereof.

There are many possible areas within any college where CSSQ scale scores might be studied. Indices of satisfaction can be useful in evaluating the effects of proposed revisions and of experimental efforts to change the college environment. In a similar manner, institutions might use the various satisfaction measures to assist in testing the validity of their selection procedures. Until we can begin to better understand this concept, "satisfaction," it will be difficult to extend the CSSQ to all of its practical uses. By including a measure of satisfaction, such as the CSSQ, in research dealing with evaluation and progress in our institutions, we will begin to accumulate data about the meaning and effects of college student satisfaction.

Reliability of the CSSQ

Reliability coefficients are reported below for each scale of the CSSQ within each of the two major normative groups: public universities and private colleges. Reliability coefficients are derived by means of the coefficient alpha method:

$$\text{rel.} = \left[\frac{n}{n-1}\left(1 - \frac{\Sigma\sigma i^2}{\sigma y^2}\right)\right]$$

Alpha coefficients for the CSSQ, representing the expected correlation of the responses on a given scale with an alternate form of the same scale, are shown in Table 1. Test-retest correlations have not yet been obtained. Stability over time for the CSSQ, however, is not considered crucial since satisfaction may be affected by changes in the environment as well as by changes in the individual's perception of that environment.

Table 1

Reliability coefficients for five CSSQ scales (Form C) separately for public and private colleges and universities

Scale	Number of items	Public Universities	Private Colleges
Working Conditions	14	.82	.82
Compensation	14	.84	.83
Quality of Education	14	.78	.79
Social Life	14	.80	.82
Recognition	14	.82	.84
TOTAL SCORE	70	.94	.94

Score reliability for public schools ranges from .78 to .84 with a median of .82 and for private schools from .79 to .84 with a median of .82.

Correlations between scales are shown in Table 2. The inter-scale correlations for private colleges range from .46 to .70, the average correlation being .5C; for public universities, scale correlations range from .35 to .62, with the average correlation being .44.

Table 2

Correlations Between CSSQ Scales for Students in Public Universities and Private Colleges

Scale	Private Colleges					
	Work. Cond.	Compens.	Qual.Educ.	Social	Recog	Total
Working Conditions	1.000	.486	.484	.600	.682	.800
Compensation		1.000	.554	.455	.482	.756
Quality of Education			1.000	.506	.533	.773
Social Life				1.000	.695	.815
Recognition					1.000	.850
Total Satisfaction						1.000

Scale	Public Universities					
	Work. Cond.	Compens.	Qual.Educ.	Social	Recog	Total
Working Conditions	1.000	.348	.456	.537	.578	.743
Compensation		1.000	.530	.390	.401	.726
Quality of Education			1.000	.439	.524	.774
Social Life				1.000	.619	.769
Recognition					1.000	.802
Total Satisfaction						1.000

Validity Studies

As a part of the development of the CSSQ, several studies have been undertaken to investigate the validity of the instrument as a measure of college student satisfaction. In general these studies have developed out of the conceptualization which initially instigated the development of the CSSQ: that student satisfaction can be viewed as an analogue of job satisfaction; thus, that findings from job satisfaction research should also be demonstrable in studies of college student satisfaction.

Research in job satisfaction, for example, has consistently shown a negative correlation between job satisfaction and turnover; i.e., higher satisfaction is associated with less turnover, a greater likelihood that the worker will remain on the job rather than quit.

Starr, Betz and Menne (1971) administered the CSSQ to 1,968 students attending Iowa State University (ISU) in the 1968-69 year. Later in the fall of 1969, the investigators obtained data regarding the academic status of the students in the sample, and the sample was then subdivided into three groups:

(1) Those students who were no longer registered I.S.U. students, and whose cumulative grade point average for the previous year was less than 2.0 (Academic Dropouts);

(2) Those who were no longer registered but whose grade point average was 2.0 or above (Non-academic Dropouts);

(3) Those who were still registered (Non-dropouts).

A comparison of the satisfaction scores of the three groups resulted as predicted: the Non-dropouts were the most satisfied, followed by the Non-academic Dropouts, and, at the lowest satisfaction level, the Academic Dropouts.

Other studies have investigated other variables in relation to college student satisfaction, with the following results: CSSQ scores have been shown to be positively related to age (Sturtz, 1971) and type of university residence (Betz, Klingensmith & Menne, 1970). In a further study of 3,121 students attending 10 public and private colleges and universities, satisfaction was shown to differ significantly, the private college students being more satisfied on the Quality of Education, Recognition, and Compensation scales, the public university students being more satisfied with Social Life and Working Conditions. (Betz, Starr & Menne, 1971).

An additional means of investigating the validity of an instrument is by statistically testing the conceptualized scale components of the test. The factor analytic study of the CSSQ scales was conducted for this purpose, the results largely supporting the scales as originally developed (Betz, Menne, Starr & Klingensmith, 1971).

Other studies are currently in progress to continue and extend the investigation of the meaning and relationships of the CSSQ scores.

CSSQ NORMS

Tentative CSSQ norms have been developed, based on administration of the CSSQ in the spring of 1970 to 3,121 students attending 10 colleges and universities. Of the 10 institutions, 4 were private colleges and 6 were public universities[1]. These ten schools cannot be construed as representative of all college students, but they represent a broad spread of geographic areas and a variety of educational institutions. The data were divided into separate normative groups, by type of institution, also by sex within type of institution, since comparison of means indicated that these groups differed significantly on all CSSQ scales, as shown in Tables 3 and 4 (pages 9,10). CSSQ score differences by year in school (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior) were also analyzed; however, mean differences were not significant and norms were not, therefore, constructed separately on this variable.

The resultant CSSQ norms are shown in Tables 5 through 10, providing percentile equivalents for raw scores on each CSSQ scale, separately for public and private colleges and universities, and also separately by sex.

[1]Public Universities: Arizona State, California (Riverside), Iowa State, Oklahoma State, Washington State, West Chester State (Penn.); Private Colleges: Webster (St. Louis), Macalester (St. Paul), Drury (Springfield, Mo.), Wartburg (Waverly, Iowa).

Table 3

Comparison of College Student Satisfaction

in Public Versus Private Colleges and Universities

Scale	Public University Students (N=2,287)		Private College Students (N=834)		t
	M	SD	M	SD	
Compensation	40.15	7.72	41.92	7.34	5.90**
Social Life	42.87	9.80	38.78	9.31	10.76**
Working Conditions	41.75	8.36	37.54	8.35	12.38**
Recognition	39.73	7.93	44.66	8.47	14.50**
Quality of Education	40.34	8.22	42.85	8.79	7.17**
Total Satisfaction	204.83	32.13	205.74	33.69	.67

*p < .05
**p < .01

Table 4

Comparison of College Student Satisfaction, Separately for Men and for Women, in Public and Private Colleges and Universities

Scale	Men Students					Women Students				
	Public (N=1157)		Private (N=371)		t	Public (N=1130)		Private (N=463)		t
	M	SD	M	SD		M	SD	M	SD	
Compensation	40.07	7.96	41.78	7.29	3.89**	40.23	7.47	42.03	7.38	4.39**
Social Life	41.78	9.89	39.36	8.57	4.57**	43.98	9.58	38.31	9.85	10.50**
Working Conditions	41.89	8.51	37.09	8.07	9.79**	41.60	8.21	37.90	8.55	7.87**
Recognition	39.59	8.15	44.16	8.57	9.14**	39.87	7.71	45.05	8.37	12.89**
Quality of Education	40.65	8.46	42.65	8.88	3.85**	40.02	7.95	43.00	8.73	6.34**
Total Satisfaction	203.99	33.83	205.04	33.19	.53	205.70	30.27	206.30	34.11	.33

* p < .05
**p < .01

Table 5

Percentile equivalents of CSSQ raw scores, for 2,287 students attending public universities

Percentile	Compensation	Social Life	Working Cond.	Recognition	Quality of Educ.	Total Score
99	58	65	62	58	60	287
97	55	62	59	55	56	266
95	53	60	56	53	54	258
90	49	55	52	50	50	247
85	48	53	50	48	48	237
80	46	51	48	46	47	231
75	45	49	47	45	45	225
70	44	47	46	43	44	220
65	43	46	45	42	43	215
50	42	45	43	41	42	211
55	41	44	42	40	41	207
50	40	43	41	39	40	203
45	39	42	40	38	39	199
40	38	40	39	37	38	196
35	37	39	38	36	37	192
30	36	38	37	35	36	189
25	35	36	36	34	35	185
20	34	35	35	33	33	180
15	32	33	33	32	32	174
10	30	30	31	29	30	166
5	27	26	28	27	27	155
3	25	24	27	25	25	146
1	22	21	24	23	22	138

Table 6

Percentile equivalents of CSSQ raw scores for 1,157 male students attending public universities

Percentile	Compensation	Social Life	Working Cond.	Recognition	Quality of Educ.	Total Score
99	58	65	63	58	60	293
97	56	61	59	56	57	278
95	53	59	56	54	54	264
90	50	54	53	50	51	248
85	48	52	51	48	49	251
80	46	50	49	46	47	231
75	45	48	47	44	45	224
70	44	46	46	43	44	218
65	43	45	44	42	43	214
60	42	44	43	41	42	210
55	41	43	42	40	41	206
50	40	42	41	39	40	202
45	39	40	40	38	39	197
40	38	39	39	37	38	195
35	37	38	38	36	37	191
30	36	37	37	35	36	188
25	34	35	36	34	35	183
20	33	33	35	33	34	179
15	32	31	33	31	32	173
10	30	29	31	29	30	166
5	27	26	28	27	27	155
3	25	22	27	26	25	146
1	22	20	24	22	21	138

Table 7

Percentile equivalents of CSSQ raw scores, for 1,130 female students attending public universities

Percentile	Compensation	Social Life	Working Cond.	Recognition	Quality of Educ.	Total Score
99	57	66	62	58	58	275
97	54	62	57	55	55	263
95	52	60	55	53	53	256
90	49	56	51	50	50	246
85	47	54	50	48	48	237
80	46	52	48	46	46	232
75	45	50	47	45	45	226
70	44	48	45	43	44	221
65	43	47	44	42	43	216
60	42	46	43	41	41	212
55	41	45	42	40	40	208
50	40	44	41	39	39	205
45	39	42	40	38	38	201
40	38	41	39	37	37	198
35	37	40	38	36	36	194
30	36	39	37	35	35	190
25	35	37	36	34	34	186
20	34	36	34	33	33	182
15	33	34	32	32	32	175
10	31	32	31	30	30	166
5	27	27	28	27	27	157
3	25	25	26	26	26	150
1	21	22	23	23	23	143

Table 8

Percentile equivalents of CSSQ raw scores, 834 students attending private colleges

Percentile	Compensation	Social Life	Working Cond.	Recognition	Quality of Educ.	Total Score
99	60	61	58	65	62	286
97	56	57	54	61	60	270
95	54	55	51	59	57	262
90	51	51	47	55	54	248
85	49	49	45	53	52	241
80	47	46	44	51	50	232
75	46	45	43	50	48	227
70	45	43	41	48	47	221
65	44	42	40	47	46	217
60	43	40	39	46	45	214
55	42	39	38	45	44	209
50	41	38	37	44	43	204
45	--	37	36	43	41	200
40	40	36	35	42	40	196
35	39	35	34	41	39	192
30	38	34	33	40	38	189
25	37	32	32	39	37	186
20	36	31	31	38	36	181
15	35	29	29	36	34	175
10	33	27	26	35	31	168
5	30	23	24	31	28	152
3	28	22	22	30	26	146
1	25	20	19	27	23	128

Table 9

Percentile equivalents of CSSQ raw scores, for 371 Male students attending private colleges

Percentile	Compensation	Social Life	Working Cond.	Recognition	Quality of Educ.	Total Score
99	61	61	60	66	65	293
97	58	56	54	63	61	280
95	52	53	51	59	58	256
90	50	50	47	54	53	246
85	48	48	45	52	50	238
80	47	46	43	50	49	231
75	46	45	42	49	48	225
70	45	44	41	48	47	220
65	44	43	40	47	46	217
60	43	41	39	46	45	213
55	42	40	38	45	43	209
50	41	39	37	44	42	205
45	40.5	38	36	43	41.5	200
40	40	37	35	42	40.5	196
35	39	36	34	41	40	192
30	38	35	33	40	39	190
25	37	34	32	38	37.5	187
20	36	32	31	37	36	181
15	35	31	29	36	34	177
10	34	29	27	34	31	170
5	30	25	24	31	28	154
3	28	23	22	30	25.5	148
1	25	21	19	26	23	137

Table 10

Percentile equivalents for CSSQ raw scores, for 463 female students attending private colleges.

Percentile	Compensation	Social Life	Working Cond.	Recognition	Quality of Educ.	Total Score
99	60	62	58	64	61	283
97	56	58	55	61	59	274
95	54	56	52	59	57	266
90	51	52	48	56	54	251
85	49	49	46	54	52	243
80	47	46	44	52	50	233
75	46	44	43	50	48	227
70	45	43	42	49	47	222
65	44	40	41	48	46	218
60	43	39	40	47	45	214
55	42	38	39	45	44	208
50	41.5	37	38	44	42	204
45	41	36	37	43	41	200
40	40	35	35	42	40	196
35	39	34	34	41	39	192
30	38	33	33	40	38	188
25	37	32	32	39	37	185
20	36	30	31	38	36	181
15	35	28	29	37	34	175
10	33	25	26	36	32	169
5	31	23	23	33	28	152
3	29	21	22	29	26	145
1	25	20	20	27	23	140

DIRECTIONS FOR GROUP ADMINISTRATION

Before Beginning:

1. See that everyone is seated and has something to write on (a book or magazine will do, if tables are not available for everyone).
2. See that everyone has a No. 2 pencil; do not use pens.
3. Give everyone a test booklet in which an answer sheet has been inserted just inside the front cover.

When everyone is ready, read the following in an informal manner:

You should all have a No. 2 pencil...please use ONLY a No. 2 pencil in filling out the questionnaire. No pens.

The booklet you have been given is a questionnaire about your satisfaction as a college student. The purpose of the questionnaire is to provide a means by which all students -- both those who are satisfied with college and those who are not -- can express their feelings about it. This will help our college find out more about what students here want and need in their college.

On the inside cover of your test booklet are some brief directions for you to read...you will be asked to print your name and other information on your answer sheet. We are requesting this information for research purposes only. Your individual scores will be kept entirely confidential -- they will be used only for research on groups as a whole.

Now read the directions and begin filling out the questionnaire.

When students finish:

1. Collect an answer sheet and a test booklet from each student, and
2. Collect pencils.

Information for the Test Administrator

Questions You May Be Asked:

1. Why do I have to give my name?

   Suggested Answer:

   Because we hope to do some research that will require additional information--like size of home town, or size of high school--where we would have to look up the information. We couldn't do studies like that unless we had the names of the students.

   We promise that your individual scores on this questionnaire will not be available to anyone here at _____ College/University--they will be used only in group research.

   However, if you feel very strongly about it, leave your name out. Do at least give us the other information, however--your age, class, etc.

2. Why are you doing this research?

   Suggested Answer:

   It will help us find out what things students like about this college and what things they don't like, and also how we compare with colleges elsewhere in the country.

TO OBTAIN CSSQ MATERIALS AND SCORING ---

Order From: Central Iowa Associates, Inc.
1408 Meadowlane Avenue
Ames, Iowa 50010

Cost:
CSSQ Booklets----------$.35 per booklet
Answer Sheets (IBM #511)---------- $2.00 per 100
CSSQ Manual (available July 1)---------- $2.50 per copy

Scoring Services:

1. Printout for Group (2 copies)---$10.00 (Min.) for 1st 100 plus $5.00 for each additional 100 or part thereof

2. Printout for each subject (2 copies)--add $1.00 to each price above

3. IBM response card (10 digit I.D. plus 70 items)----------
   With Service No. 1, add $1.00 per 100
   Without Service No. 1, add $10.00 per 100

4. IBM Scale Score Card for each subject (10 digit I.D. plus five scale scores and total satisfaction score)
   Add $1.00 to prices in No. 1 above

Postage not included. Answer sheets not returned unless requested.

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